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EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS BY R. BURNS

From Ackerman's Repository, for Oct. 1818.

MR. Wordsworth. in a pamphlet he published I think something more than a year ago, endeavoured to separate the poetical from the personal character of Robert Burns: his argument was ingenious, and it had a benevolent object in view; viz. as far as possible to hide from sight the defective parts of the conduct of our Scottish bard: he contended that the one was quite distinct from the other, and that while it was of the utmost consequence to estimate rightly and esteem highly his poetical character, it was of little importance to scrutinize closely the objectional parts of his demeanour—that we should rather look at the man through his writings, than at his writings through the man. I confess that I was not, and am not, by any means satisfied upon this point; and although it may be true, that to form a fair opinion of the merit of his poems, it may not be necessary to take the private history and demeanour of the writer into account, yet it is necessary to do so in order to arrive at a correct judgment of his merits as a poet: we cannot ascertain fairly what credit he deserves for his productions, without knowing in some degree the circumstances under which they were

composed. At the same time I am not for prying too closely into secret history, or for calling any man, especially one that is dead, to too strict an account for the errors into which he might be led by youthful heat and inexperience; but I still insist, that some insight into general temperament and deportment, must aid considerably in fulfilling the duty of judicious criticism.

It is for this purpose chiefly that I inclose for publication the following extracts from certain private letters, written by Burns while he was resident at Edinburgh toward the latter part of his short life (which ended in 1796), but before his frame had been much impaired by irregularities, and when his mind retained all its fulness and force of passion. These letters were printed in Edinburgh shortly after his death; but as the greater part of them related to some amour with a lady, not much redounding to his credit, they were fitly suppressed as a whole collection. At the same time I see no reason why such parts of them should not be published, as display forcibly and truly the nature and peculiarities of the poet's mind, with

"So much of earth, so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood."

Of their authenticity I believe no doubt need be entertained: the copy from which the annexed extracts are made, was lent me by a friend, who highly valued it, and who I believe had it from the printer, who saved it from among a great number of copies which were burnt. I may add, that in the life of Burns by Dr. Currie. I do not find any mention of the particulars noticed in this correspondence. It will be seen that the writer was sufficiently passionate in his declarations, but I have not included sentences even of greater warmth and feeling.

ANDREW C.

Edinburgh, Aug. 18.

The extracts are given as the letters followed each other in the small 12mo. pamphlet from which they are taken, and I have not thought it worth while to subjoin the particular dates, where any are given in the originals.

"I do love you, if possible, still better for having so fine a taste and turn for poesy. I have again gone wrong in my usual unguarded way, but you may erase the word, and put esteem, respect, or any other tame Dutch expression you please in its place. I believe there is no holding converse, or carrying on correspondence, with an amiable woman, much less a *gloriously amiable, fine woman*, without some mixture of that delicious passion, whose most devoted slave I have more than once had the honour of being. But why be hurt or offended on that account? Can no honest man have a prepossession for a fine woman, but he must run his head against an intrigue? Take a little of the tender witchcraft of love, and add to it the generous, the honourable sentiments of manly friendship,

and I know but *one* more delightful morsel, which few, few in any rank ever taste. Such a composition is like adding cream to strawberries—it not only gives the fruit a more elegant richness, but has a peculiar deliciousness of its own."

"I like to have quotations for every occasion. They give one's ideas so pat, and save one the trouble of finding expression adequate to one's feelings. I think it is one of the greatest pleasures attending a poetick genius, that we can give our woes, cares, joys, loves, &c. an embodied form in verse: which to me is ever immediate ease."

"What a strange mysterious faculty is that thing called *imagination*! We have no ideas almost at all of another world; but I have often amused myself with visionary schemes of what happiness might be enjoyed by small alterations, alterations that we can fully enter into in this present state of existence. For instance, suppose you and I just as we are at present; the same reasoning powers, sentiments, and even desires; the same fond curiosity for knowledge and remarking observation in our minds; and imagine our bodies free from pain, and the necessary supplies for the wants of nature at all times and easily within our reach: imagine further, that we were set free from the laws of gravitation which bind us to this globe, and could at pleasure fly without inconvenience through all the yet un conjectured bounds of creation—what a life of bliss would we lead in our mutual pursuit of virtue and knowledge, and our mutual enjoyment of friendship and love."

"Have you ever met a perfect character? Do we not sometimes rather exchange faults than get rid of them? For instance, I am

perhaps tired with and shocked at a life too much the prey of giddy inconsistencies and thoughtless follies; by degrees I grow sober, prudent, and statedly pious—I say statedly, because the most unaffected devotion is not at all inconsistent with my first character—I join the world in congratulating myself on the happy change. But let me pry more narrowly into this affair: have I, at bottom, any thing of a secret pride in these endowments and emendations? Have I nothing of a Presbyterian sourness, or hypocritical severity, when I survey my less regular neighbours? In a word, have I missed all those nameless and numberless modifications of indistinct selfishness, which are so near our own eyes that we can scarce bring them within our sphere of vision, and which the known spotless cambric of our character hides from the ordinary observer?”

“Coarse minds are not aware how much they injure the keenly feeling tie of bosom-friendship, when, in their foolish officiousness, they mention what nobody cares for recollecting. People of nice sensibility and generous minds have a certain intrinsick dignity, that fires at being trifled with, or lowered, or even too nearly approached.”

“My favourite feature in Milton’s Satan is his manly fortitude in supporting what cannot be remedied—in short, the wild broken fragments of a noble exalted mind in ruins. I meant no more by saying he was a favourite hero of mine.”

“I mentioned to you my letter to Dr. Moore, giving an account of my life: it is truth, every word of it; and I will give you the just idea of a man whom you have honoured with your friendship. I am afraid you will hardly be able to make sense of so torn a piece.”

“How wretched is the condition of one who is haunted with conscious guilt, and trembling under the idea of a dreaded vengeance! And what a placid calm, what a charming secret enjoyment it gives, to bosom the kind feelings of friendship and the fond throes of love! Out upon the tempest of anger, the acrimonious gall of fretful impatience, the sullen frost of lowering resentment, or the corroding poison of withered envy! They eat up the immortal part of man! If they spent their fury only on the unfortunate objects of them, it would be something in their favour; but these miserable passions, like that traitor Iscariot, betray their lord and master.”

(To be continued.)

From the Literary Gazette.

A SPANISH STORY.

(Concluded from Vol. I. page 392.)

AFTER dinner, my lady came to her Siesta. She was very thoughtful, and sparing of her conversation. I attributed this to the departure of the French, or rather of the Colonel. “So my lady,” and I, “they are going away.” “Yes, Brigida, they are, thank Heaven, though I fear, not for good.” At this moment Rosina came in, and said that Diego had returned. “Bring him up,” exclaimed my lady, springing from the bed. “Into your bed-room,” I observed with wonder.—“Yes,” said she, “here or anywhere.” Rosina now came back with Diego,

bringing a letter which my lady snatched from him, and putting her finger on her lips, "Remember, Diego" were her words. "I will, my dear lady," replied he, but stood still. I believe he was as eager as myself to know the contents of the letter; but my lady hurried out of the room. I followed her as close as I could to the saloon, where the Colonel had been sitting. I believe it was for him she was looking, but he had gone out soon after dinner. She paced the room with great anxiety for about half an hour, and then sat down to the piano; she played a few notes of the patriotick song, then got up, stood motionless, lifted her hand above her head, and then began to walk up and down with a very quick pace. At this juncture the Colonel came in—my lady ran to him with the letter, which she had put in her bosom. The Colonel took the letter and read—"I thank you for your information, but it is quite incorrect; the enemy are retreating in every direction, and I shall follow up the advantage I have gained—52,000!—it is impossible,"—may God preserve you many years,—from your affectionate Uncle." B.

"There is but one thing for it now," said the Colonel; "I have ordered all the troops from Ordunna, agreeably to my commands, but I have not given the route which was pointed out. I have sent them out of the way of the impending business, but I fear the trap is too well placed for us to break the spring of it, since your uncle will not believe that it is laid. There is now," continued he, "but one thing for it, and that is, that I go to him myself. My own company is so attached to me, I am convinced I can persuade them to join in the cause of the patriots. They are all Tyrolese, and, as such, know how sacred a thing is liberty, and how great a villain the man is who wrest-

ed it from them, and is endeavouring to tear it from the Spaniards." "May God bless you!" said my lady, as she threw herself upon his neck in tears. The Colonel took out his handkerchief to wipe them away, but could not see them for his own—thus, without a word they stood, and I believe, in innocence, tasted the most refined pleasures of friendship. "I will go and prepare for my departure," said he, collecting himself, "and you must be so kind as to order Diego to accompany me, that I may send him on before occasionally; in the mean time," continued he, drawing a paper from his sleeve, "here is the little translation I promised to you; you can read it when you have nothing better to do." My lady took it from him with a marked complaisance and put it in her bosom; the Colonel then observed there was no time to be lost, and that to arrive soon enough to prevent the snare, he proposed setting off at 10 o'clock that night, with seventy of his detachment, who had attached themselves to his person, so that he begged a letter might be ready at that time, for the Spanish General her uncle. My lady took him by the hand, with more pleasure in her countenance than I ever saw before in that of any one, and walked down stairs with him, continuing all the way to hold his hand,—a piece of impudence I should not have thought her capable of. Said I to myself, as they passed my hiding hole, if you meet Don Antoni now, what a precious explosion we shall have. However they encountered no one, and she returned in high spirits. About 10 o'clock Don Antonio came home, and found my lady and myself in the saloon; she had been writing, but was now playing and singing. She had very handsomely told me all I knew before, but there was still a strangeness in the matter, the drift of which I could not under-

stand. "Well, my dear," said Don Antonio, "It gives me great pleasure to see you join in the general sensation of the day, for I was afraid that the departure of our guest might not be altogether agreeable to you." "He told me," replied my lady, "that he would go at 10 to night; I shall be glad when he is gone," continued she; but I am not uneasy—for I am sure he will keep his word." "It is just 10 now," said Don Antonio. "And there he is," returned she, seeing him enter the door. "Welcome, Colonel," said Don Antonio. "I have only come to take leave," he replied; "I am just going." "Nay, you shall not go before supper," said Don Antonio. "I cannot stay one moment," rejoined the Colonel. "You must stay supper," repeated Don Antonio, embracing him. "Excuse me, my dear friend," rejoined the Colonel, "I cannot delay." "Let him go," said my lady, "perhaps he cannot stay." "How do you know any thing about it," replied her husband angrily. "There it is, Colonel! now that you are going away, you may see really who are your friends among us." "Then," rejoined my lady, "as you are so very kind, let us see you produce some of your liquer de Barbade, and drink to the Colonel's good health before he goes." "Well, I will," said Don Antonio, and immediately went out of the saloon into the study, where he kept this precious stuff locked up. The instant he turned his back, my lady drew a letter from her bosom, which she had written in the early part of the evening, and put it into the Colonel's hand. They seemed to have forgotten that I was in the room, for he kissed the hand that gave it to him, saying, "We will meet again I trust, under more propitious circumstances." "May it please God," she replied, "to crown our wishes!" They now

looked at each other, as if they wished to say, or do something, which they did not dare; but they neither said, nor did any thing, but continued to hold each others hands, looking I cannot tell how. "Farewell," said my lady, bursting from him; he struck his hand upon his forehead as she fled, and sunk upon the chair that stood near him. In a few minutes Don Antonio returned with a flask, but he solicited the Colonel in vain to taste of it, who turning round to me, as Don Antonio drank his health, said, "Farewell, Duenna;" then taking a gold ring from his finger, which he gave to me, he embraced Don Antonio, and took his leave. "Where is Donna Aminta," said her husband to me, as soon as the Colonel had gone down stairs. "In her chamber," I replied; "where should she be?" "I should like to see her then," continued he, "for there is no knowing what schemes there may be against me." "Oh," said I, "if you suspect any thing, come along with me." I now walked as slowly as possible towards my lady's room, so that he lost all patience before we arrived there; which was just what pleased me. We found my lady sitting in the dark, but the candle which I carried in my hand showed her to be much engaged in thought. When Don Antonio found she was there, he apologized by saying he only wished to know where she would desire to sup. "I am not very well," said she, "Duenna, I would like to go to bed." He left us, and my lady proceeded to undress, and hurried herself to rest—but never could I imagine her reasons for it, unless it was to get rid of me; and God knows there was no occasion for that, as I was already in the secret: however, I kissed her hand, and retired to bed also. In the morning she called me to matins, which was the reverse of our custom. She

looked as if she had slept little, although she went to bed early. "It is late, Duenna," said she, "although it be dark; the day is gloomy." I arose immediately, and certainly we were in the church before any body. I felt the morning very cold, and was very glad when we returned home to our chocolate: I took mine with great pleasure, but my lady turned her cup round and round, and stirred it twenty times, and then after dipping the toast, she left it there, and set down the cup. "I do not care for it, Brigida," said she; "tell Senor Juan I wish to speak to him." I obeyed; and in about a quarter of an hour, Senor Juan made his appearance. "I kiss your Excellency's hand," said he, "pray command me." "Have the goodness, then," she replied, "to go through the town inquiring for all sorts of publick news from Biscay." "I will do it willingly," said he, and withdrew. "Now, Brigida," said my lady, "we will go to our country garden, and there pass the day; I will take my guitar, and you your spindle, that we may amuse ourselves if we can." "That is well put in," said I. The sun came out as we left the house, which made our walk extremely pleasant, for the morning had been dark and lowering, with a cold east wind. It was 9 o'clock when we entered the garden, where we amused ourselves counting the bunches on a muscadine vine during the greater part of the forenoon. "This is endless work," said my lady; "I have no genius for counting truly, come." Now, I counted the bunches over and over again patiently, while my lady walked up and down the gravel before me. "How many do you think there are?" said I. "Perhaps 666," said my lady. "No, indeed," replied I, "the good vine is not the best in the Apocalypse." "I wish it were," exclaimed she, "we should

soon root him out, even if he had fourteen crowns and twenty horns, and every crown and every horn was marked *Napoleon*." "Heaven save us, my lady!" said I, crossing myself, "I always have the horrors when any one speaks of the devil." "Come, come, Duenna," said she, "let us talk no more of him. Come away and help me to gather some laurel and a few roses, that to-morrow I may have a garland ready for ———." "For whom, my lady?" said I at once. "For a friend of ours, for a friend of our country." "The French Colonel, my life on it!" exclaimed I. "Not a word, Brigida," said she. "But in one thing you have been mistaken. He is not a Frenchman, but a Tyrolese, forced into Napoleon's service, and hating its crimes." "Oh, I am so glad!" said I, "now I understand the mystery of your loves." "No Brigida," she replied, "do not mislead yourself. If I were inclined to love him I dare not, my heart will never admit of an unbecoming sentiment." "But you looked at him as if you could love him," said I. "Perhaps I did, Brigida; but you make no distinction between the action and the person. It is abundantly easy to abhor an action, and yet to love the person guilty of it. I own it to be my case with Don Antonio. Now if I can separate Don Antonio and his conduct, why not Monsieur Walstein and his?" "You are perhaps right, my child," observed I; "but remember what you yourself said to the Colonel about the danger of tempting love in any shape. Depend upon it, Duenna," she replied, "it is a mistake to say that love overcomes all things, or that he is the tyrant of our liberty. To attribute all to fate and necessity, is but the weak stratagem of lovers to excuse their own faults." "I cannot argue with you, my dear," said I; "but pray keep in

mind the fable of the moth and the taper." She made no reply, but smiled; then taking a paper from her bosom, she said, "Neither you nor Armida's bird shall have any influence over my sentiments." "Pray, my lady, what says Armida's bird to the question?" She read it as translated by the Colonel. "Well," said she, "it is very pretty," as she finished it, and folded up the paper.

"And now let us go to gather the roses and laurels; but I will mix no myrtle with my garland I assure you. Would to heaven that I could in reality entwine it with the olive!" I do not know how I could have made the mistake, but so it was, that I plucked cypress instead of laurel. She took it from me, then looking wistfully on me, dropped it on the ground, and burst into tears. "Blessed saints!" said I, "my lady, what is the matter?" "Nothing, nothing," said she, recovering herself; "a sudden thought occurred that had almost overpowered me, but it was too like a foolish superstition. I will think no more of it. But we must gather some of this laurel," continued she, going to a shrub, and without looking at it pulling the leaves. I was surprised. "What would you do with that, my lady? it is aconite." "You know nothing about these things, I see," said she, rather displeased. "Come along, we will go home."

We arrived just time enough for dinner. But my lady sat at table, like the statue of thought feeding upon itself. Once or twice she attempted to eat something, but seemed to forget that she had put it to her lips. Don Antonio took his cigar, and my lady and I retired to her room. "I shall not lie down," said she, on entering it, "for I cannot rest. But Brigida, bring me my father's and mother's hair from the wardrobe, that I may employ

myself in plaiting it." "Dear my lady," observed I, "what puts such a fancy into your head, as to think of plaiting dead people's hair? Rosina can do it at any time, and there is no chance of making her melancholy." "I am rather unhappy, Duenna, though I do not know why; and I think looking at my father's and mother's hair may comfort me." "If so, my lady, it shall be done;" and so saying, I brought it out. "Now, Brigida, send for Rosina, to settle my own hair, while I employ myself with this." I called Rosina, who set about her work, but after she had taken out the braids, and let the hair fall, she was desired to leave it, and I help to arrange the long tresses of the dead. By my assistance, they were soon set in order, and looked, what they were, the true and plain proofs of Iberian blood. My lady fastened them together, and hung them thus round her own neck. She stood up to admire their length; and indeed it was admirable, for they hung down to her feet, like a sable tippet, such as you may have seen worn by some beautiful maiden of England or Russia. As she stood, her figure engaged me much, but her countenance still more; I would have given the world to know what thoughts passed in her mind, as she gazed upon the dark tresses of her parents, but whatever they were, her soul seemed entirely occupied, it was perhaps filled with a presentiment of what was so soon to come.

The door of the chamber opened. I thought it was accident, and went to shut it. To my astonishment I saw Diego, pale and covered with dust; he looked like a ghost escaped from a charnel house. "What ails you," cried I. He spoke not a word, but opened his mouth as if exhausted. "Who is it?" said my lady—"Diego," said I, "and the picture of death, Senora." She flew to the door, and catching him by

the arm, looked him eagerly in the face, and shook her head. "It is all over then?" He made no answer, but with a trembling hand drew a paper from his breast; she looked at it for a moment, and then dropt it from her hand, exclaiming, "Oh my God!" She sunk upon the floor. While Rosina ran for water, I knowing that it was no time for ceremony, picked up the paper; it was thus:—

"My dear child, farewell. Before this reaches you, I shall be no more. My wounds are mortal, but that concerns me little. Your friend is wounded and taken. He was, alas, too late. Your information was true. But it is now finished. The day is lost, and with it, perhaps the freedom of our country. Vive Fernando. Farewell, Farewell, my child.

Vittoria. Nov. 7, 1808. BUXEDA.

My lady raised herself on one hand, and with the other seemed to brush away something that floated in the air before her eyes. Rosina and I helped her to the bed-side. But she would not lie down, continuing to look wildly round until her eyes fell on Diego; when seeming to collect herself, she said, "Where is the letter I saw just now, Diego?" Diego stood like a statue, and knew nothing; but put it into her hand. She read it over and over again; every now and then putting her hand to and from her eyes, as if to sweep away something that interrupted the sight. At last, "Oh Diego!" she exclaimed wildly, "tell me when he died."—"No one is dead, my lady," said he, scarcely intelligibly; "but," and he paused and grew paler still; "but, —they are bringing the Colonel, — tied with ropes, to Ordunna, where, they say, he is to be shot this night." "Merciful God!" she uttered in a low tone, fixing her eyes above; "and my uncle?"—"I saw him last, my lady, when he gave me this letter. He was then lying on

the large table in the Posada at Vittoria. He also gave me his purse: there it is," continued Diego, throwing it on the floor, "and he said to me, God bless you Diego, you are the son of an honest man."

The Saints deliver me, I did not know what to make of all this, but I plainly saw there was sorrow enough in it. Poor Rosina hung upon the lady Aminta's arm, and wept aloud. Diego did not move, but my lady looking strangely on him, took him by the neck, and kissed his forehead. Heaven deliver me, but I wondered at her; but when she turned round to me, and told me that I had married Godoi, and was a traitor, I trembled; for I saw that her wits were gone. Rosina tried to soothe her; "Do not you know your own Duenna, my dear lady?" said she. But so strange were my lady's looks, that Rosina trembled too. I took her hand, and went upon my knees. She raised me up, with a softened countenance, saying, "Come, let us go look for him." She was leading me to the door, when I entreated her to stop a little; she seemed persuaded, and turned towards the toilette, wreathing the hair that still hung from her neck, round and round her arms. Catching up some of the flowers and shrubs that we had brought in with us, "Here," turned she to Rosina, giving her a rose, "put that in your bosom, and wrap patience round the thorn. We will go now, my mother," she repeated, touching my face with some sprigs of the laurel which she had held in her hand; then suddenly starting, she threw them down, exclaiming, "No! I will have none of you. My mother told me in a dream last night, that you were aconite." "God save you, my lady," interrupted I; "it is night—pray, and go to bed."—"I am not dead yet," said she, "why bury me? I am going to a wedding.

Will you go too? If not, stay here, and I will send for you."—"Providence keep us all in our senses," thought I; then looking at her, oppressed by such a thought, I was overcome, and fell into violent hystericks.

What happened for some time, I know not, but when I recovered, I found myself in bed, and alone. There seemed to be a dreadful noise in the streets. I endeavoured to collect myself, and ran from room to room to find my unfortunate lady. A great light in the streets, and the sound of a vast tumult drew me to the balcony. I saw the Colonel, lying in a cart, almost lifeless, and bloody, with his hands tied behind him. He was in the midst of soldiers, horse and foot. I thought that the lady Aminta, might have seen the same sight, and that it had driven her to despair. I looked among the crowd for her, but to no purpose. There was not a soul in the house. So finding myself unable to remain a moment longer in suspense, I ran out of doors, and made my way immediately towards the square. Seeing that I could not get through the crowd when I reached it, I went round to the Posada, where I might overlook it from the balcony. The door was not to be passed for the press of people. They were carrying in the Colonel's dead body. I now knew the meaning of the musketry I had heard as I was getting towards the square. I forced my way up after the body, into the great room. The moment they set it down, I discovered my lady coming towards it. She did not

start at the sight, but sat down by its side without emotion; then lifting its eyelids with her fingers; "Do not you know me?" she sighed. You used not to look at me thus!" Then pausing, and casting her eyes up and down the body, "Ah!" said she, shaking her head, "I see it has rained blood in Spain this day. On this she arose suddenly, and taking him by the hand, "Come with me, Walstein; I have laurels for you. Buxeda sent them by Diego." Then kneeling, she took her uncle's letter, and tearing it into little stripes, stuck it in his hair, with a few green sprigs which she had kept in her hand. "And here are roses for you," as she pulled off the leaves of a rose, and threw them on his cheek. "But they will fade too; I will go and bring you lilies. Stop then," wept she, "stop, and do not move until I come again."

"Alas! poor lady," continued the Duenna, "oppressed by the fate of her friend, her relation, and her country, her sole delight is now to wander about the roads and gardens, singing broken songs, and gathering shrubs and flowers. I attended close to her in all her walks, and have succeeded this morning in persuading her to come in and rest herself. For my part I think it was Heaven's mercy that deprived her of her wits. There she lies," said the Duenna, pointing to an inner room, "there she lies, poor thing, fast asleep, and may her sleep be refreshing; for she was the sweetest lady that ever eyes looked at upon Spanish ground."

From the European Magazine, for Oct. 1818.

AN ARCTICK ISLANDER IN LONDON.

By the Author of Extracts from a Lawyer's Portfolio.

SIR,
MY correspondent on board the
Isabella, whose journal afford-

ed some extracts for your last Magazine,* sent only a short letter by his Majesty's ship the Majestick,

* See No. 30. page 49.

which arrived last month with despatches from the Arctick navigators. It informed me, that on leaving the colony mentioned in his former communication, he had persuaded one of the natives to accompany him on board, and congratulated himself very cordially on his safe return to his ship, when he found the ice which had been mistaken for a part of the continent, was only one of those bergs, or islands, which change their places continually, and have been met travelling in the Atlantick, where one of them nearly sunk an American sloop loaded with a sea-serpent's head, which an unphilosophical exciseman mistook for a pipe of Maderia. When the boats came in quest of official letters for H. M. S. the Majestick, the Arctick Islander, believing his colony *ab origine* from England, expressed an invincible desire to visit the native country of his ancestors; and after some consideration among the literary gentlemen attached to the Expedition, each of whom claimed a share in the profits resulting from him, he was put on board one the boats under the custody of Dr. Cacosfog,† who availed himself of this pretext to return home. Being undeniably the prize and property of my friend, and entitled, as a descendant of Englishmen, to an exemption from sale, he was wrapped in a large boat-cloak, and entered at the Custom-house, when he landed here, as a sick seamen from the *Isabella*. Lest the managers of the Museum, or the great theatres, should hear of such an acquisition, I went myself in my own post-chariot to convey him to my house, where, according to my friend's letter, he permitted him to reside. Fortunately, his appearance did not excite my servant's curiosity, as his attire was English. His person is far under the usual height, rather round, and too much elevated about the shoulders;—but this defect was easily concealed by attaching only half-a-dozen capes to the loose pelerrine of his coat;—he is extremely short-sighted, as is usual with the natives of the frigid zone, and has the breadth of nose and chin which Buffon and Cuvier consider peculiar to them; therefore our fashionable lorgnette and cravat were really requisite to diminish these disadvantages. The bluish tint of his hair is not remarkable during the present fashion. The lethargick apathy of men born in cold countries is so well known, that I was not surprised at his doze during the greater part of our journey; but when we crossed Westminster-bridge, and came within view of those long lines and transverse vistas of light which the lamps of our streets afford, I could not avoid an attempt to rouse his attention. He replied in very intelligible English, and with all the dryness of an English traveller, that he saw nothing equal to his home; adding that their galleries and colonnades dug under mountains of ice were far more brilliantly illuminated. Then looking gravely at Dr. Blinkensop, who occupied the third place in my carriage, he inquired why he was not walking about? Being asked what his question implied, he informed us, that in his island all the learned men were employed to traverse the streets at night with lanterns on their heads, or to stand at equal distances for the useful purpose of enlightening their countrymen and saving oil. Dr. Blinkensop concealed his mortification by discussing the Catoptrical mode of gathering, folding, breaking, and bundling, sun and moon beams, to answer the purposes of a kitchen fire; suggesting that this kind of

† *Alias* Blinkensop.

solar cookery would be very convenient to the Arctick navigators, if their fuel should be exhausted.

Upon our arrival at my chambers, our Islander, who calls himself Neonous, was more particularly introduced to me as his future host and cicerone; and expressed his courteous disposition by three low bows, and some obliging words, which, as his colony seems to have been founded by Englishmen of the last century, were probably derived from their customs. But he soon appeared most agreeably easy and familiar; and during supper, at which he ate with a voracity which astonished my butler, though he once waited at the Lord Mayor's feast, he addressed me with all the nonchalance of a Bencher who had eaten twenty terms with me, and begged me to tell him whether hanging was an agreeable sensation?—Now, though I understand the sensation created by a fall of stocks, by "crossing Oxford-street," and by being caught in the act of speaking to an ill-dressed friend, I could not profess any acquaintance with the sensation of hanging, though it is one peculiarly studied in the present age. "But, Sir," I said, "as the words of our language have undergone great and various misapplications, even in this country, the awkward words which signifies a very vulgar situation, may be used in your's to signify some polite amusement; as quizzing, hoaxing, and other elegant synonymes, have been borrowed from the dialect of thieves to enrich a gentleman's."—"Sir," replied Neonous, "I understand you are a barrister; and in my nation we hang an attorney three minutes, a conveyancer five, and a barrister a quarter of an hour, that they may fully estimate the sensation which a court of justice is apt to cause."—"O, my good friend!" interposed Dr. Blinkensop, sparing me the difficulty of

commenting on a point so nice, "such a regulation would be an infallible suspension of all talent at the bar. It is quite time enough when men deserve it."—The Islander replied, with scholastick dignity, "Ah! there is the error of your English legislature. Prevention, doctor, prevention is the purpose of our laws. We hang them first, that they may not come to it at last: besides, when people have a propensity to oblique courses, it is wise to make them perpendicularly upright as soon as possible."

My guest arrived late on Saturday night, therefore I had no better amusement to afford him the next morning, than to take him to a fashionable church. When we came out, he looked round inquisitively, and whispered in my ear, "This is your great Sunday, I suppose; but where is your little everyday church?"—Having understood from my friend on board the *Isabella*, that the Arctick Islanders of his colony possessed a Greek bible which they seemed to worship, I could not comprehend his question, till he added, "We have at Neonousland, as you have here, a great government church, where they talk of patience, self-denial, sobriety, and a great many other fine things, but we have little ones also, where they teach what we really do, and therefore ought to learn every day in the best manner. You know we make promises and vows to be rigidly just, faithful to our wives, and kind to our neighbours—That is all very well on great Sunday; but on little Sunday we Arctick Islanders learn the only practical part of our religion; that is—kindness to our neighbours; which consists, as you probably know, in doing exactly as they do, and in general whatever is convenient."

I assured my visitor, that the customs of his island were entirely different from our's; that nobody

presumed to give the soft names of many of his cotemporaries. I questioned Neonous on the poetry of the Arctick Isles, having received a splendid offer from a fashionable publisher of twenty-pence per line for the first translation of a polar poem—but he did not appear to comprehend me. When Dr. Blinkensop endeavoured to define poetry as a combination of beautiful ideas raised above common life, he only answered, “Then I know what poetry is, but we call it morality in our country.”

Having said this, he fell asleep; and my learned friend, raising his forefinger with a sign of caution and sagacity, drew from his folio memorandum-book a faded paper, which, as he whispered, had been found in the cabin allotted to Neonous on board the Majestick, and was probably a relick of the Greek literature conveyed to Nenousland by its first inhabitants. It was in the ancient Alexandrine character, as cut by Wynkyn de Worde in imitation of that valuable manuscript presented by Cyrillus Lucaris, patriarch of Alexandria, to King Charles I. in 1628. I have transcribed the first lines with all the accuracy in my power, and must confess that two of the characters strongly resemble an &c. though they are said to be the true Alexandrine alpha and sigma.

A newspaper in my barouche served to exemplify this truth, and to amuse Neonous during our drive through the Park, which did not interest him greatly, though he saw several persons whom he mistook for his countrymen, being deceived, perhaps, by their lethargick air and furred costume. Dr. Blinkensop inquired if the people of his island occupied themselves much in politicks, and was answered, “Certainly!—but what we call politicks is a great toy, forty times larger than your Kaleidoscope, and turned by every body which way they like best.” Dr. B. carefully recorded this answer in his note-book, for the information of the literary societies throughout Europe, and as an unanswerable proof that Dr. Brewster did not invent the first kaliedoscope, whatever may be the testi-

ΘΗ · · ΜΙΝΙΣΤΕΡΣΠΑΤ &c.

Σαῖς η

Ἰ' ση ἀ ἀνδύ κᾶννοτση
 Σόμετραῖ τορσᾶρετρί ἰνγτᾶ βηγινᾶ
 Τυννελ φρομηρε τὸ Σαῖντηληνά
 Ἰάστ ὕας ἰηκρα κᾶσοφ' Μευξ σὺάτ
 Ἀνδφρομητη κατμκάμσταράτ

“Nobody,” said Dr. Blinkensop, putting on his spectacles, “can doubt the antiquity and Homerick origin of these lines—Observe the fine epick opening of the chief per-

sonage's harangue, without preambles or peroration——

Says he,

‘I see a hand you cannot see!’

which also shews us the plagiarism committed by Tickell in the most admired verse of his exquisite ballad.”—“Under due submission to your superiour knowledge,” said I, “I should be apt to think this a copy of the Romaick fragment communicated by M. Chateaubriand to Lord C.’s secretary, and said to be remarkably predictive of an event which happened lately on the banks of the Thames.”—“The Thames!” echoed my antiquary—“when did its banks ever produce such sublime projectors as the next lines describe—

Some traitors are trying to begin a
Tunnel from here to Saint Helena——

A project worthy the geniuses of ancient Greece. I have no doubt that future generations, when the revolutions of nature have dried up the Atlantick, will discover traces of this work which might be incredible if we had not seen the acqueducts of Rome and Attica. But here is a line full of dubitation, and by the hiatus in the MS. it appears to have been added by some Arctick poet. It is highly natural that such a poet should derive his images from local objects; therefore I propose to translate it thus—

Vast as the kraken of Mezuät.——

“I admit the probability of your tunnel,” said I, “and have no doubt that it extended to the North-pole. Perhaps that would have been the easiest way of conveying our Arctick discoverers, and no violation of the maritime law, which extends only to the surface of things. However, you must allow me to say, I perceive no kraken in this line,

nor did I ever see a name like Mezuat in any chart of those latitudes. I read it thus—

“Vast as the crack of Meux’s vat.”

—“That is not probable,” rejoined Blinkensop—“and yet it is possible that statesmen may have met last century, as they do now, to hold their consultations over a wine-vat, for I do not conceive that it could have been filled with beer. And as Smithfield was once a vineyard, it is credible that our celebrated distiller of malt may have had an ancestor who brewed wine. Pray proceed, Sir——what concludes the strophe?”

‘And from the chasm came out—a—rat.’——

“A rat!” exclaimed the Professor: “What titillates your risible muscles, my good friend? Why not a rat? Did not a mountain once bring forth a mouse? Have not rats been worshipped in the hither peninsula of India, and the Isthmus between Asia and Africa? And in modern times, as the illustrious pupil of the erudite Sheridan has recorded, did not a rat,

“for want of stairs,
Come down a rope to say his prayers?”

Where is the miracle, then, if one should come up to seek a place? for independent of his respectable black coat and reverend beard, he has all due requisites for one. Did not three rats empty a jar of oil by alternately dipping in their whiskers and regaling each other—whence, no doubt, Pope, alias Swift, derived that fine distich,

“This jelly’s good——that malmsey’s healing——
Pray dip your whiskers and

The professor was interrupted by three Bow-street officers, who perceived red spots on his coat, and

notwithstanding his asseverations that they proceeded from nitrous acid which he had used in extracting gas, he was conveyed away under suspicion of having aided a recent assassination. This fracas caused tumult enough to awaken Neonous; and his surprise was so loudly expressed, that his arrival from the Arctick regions began to be whispered, and the utmost skill of our charioteer could not preserve our residence from detection. In the evening of this Sunday I was alarmed by a visit from the principal of a polite establishment, requesting an introduction to my Arctick Islander, and offering him an engagement to instruct her pupils in the language and dances of his nation, at five guineas each lesson. She urged so strenuously the importance he would derive from making his entrê at her house, and

in her *society* (for school is an obsolete word), that I was compelled to assure her he visited England as a gentleman whose liberty and independence were guaranteed by my honour and his own wealth. The last words were convincing: and having intimated her readiness to educate any of his female relatives, she departed to spread the intelligence among her numerous friends. Neonous heard of her proposal without any change in the usual grave decorum of his face. "We have no such useless institutions in our country," said he, "to teach our children grimaces and gambols; for our squirrel-apes are neither so mischievous nor so expensive: and as for morals, we always forbid them to do right, knowing they will do it through the spirit of contradiction."

(To be concluded in our next.)

ON WITCHCRAFT.

(Concluded from page 67.)

From the European Magazine.

IT is reported that he* caused sixty persons to be hanged in one year, under the imputation of being Wizards.

"And has he not within a year,
Hanged three-score of 'em in a shire."
— HUDIBRAS.

And that amongst them was "an old minister who had been many years a painful preacher."

His most usual victims were persons who from their age, poverty, or deformity, were already unjustly the objects of popular prejudice, and whose misfortunes, instead of protecting them, provoked the blood-thirsty spirit of this Witchfinder, while the burthen of their misery rendered them unable to contend with his detestable artifices.

Exclusive of the gift, or natural

talent, which this man affected to possess, he pretended to discover Witches by marks or spots on their bodies, which he said were the seals of the diabolical compact entered into by them for the sale of their souls to the powers of darkness. The effect of this seal was to render the part insensible, the test, therefore, was by thrusting a needle or some sharp instrument into it; if no blood followed, or no pain was felt by the unhappy subject of this experiment, it was decisive evidence of her being a Witch. It frequently happened that this test was not offered, until by previous torture, the poor wretch had been rendered insensible to the slight degree of pain caused by it, and the operators were too sanguinary and too much interested to delay

* See page 67.

the execution of their horrid barbarities. Some old persons too were convicted, in consequence of having warts which sometimes growing large and pendulous, were decided by the witchfinding criticks to be teats for the suckling young imps.

Another method of discovering Witchcraft, was by placing the accused person on a stool or table in the centre of a room crosslegged, or in some other uneasy posture, in which he or she was continued by being bound with cords, and thus watched and kept without meat and drink for 24 hours, this being the period during which the imp must come and suck. It cannot be wondered that weak and ignorant persons, under the infirmities of age, and suffering such tortures, should be agitated to phrensy and induced to confess any thing however false or ridiculous, for the purpose of putting a period to their misery, death itself being preferable to such torments. But the *dernier ressort* the darling expedient of this Witchfinder, was by tying together the toes and thumbs of the persons suspected, a cord being then fastened about the waist and held on the bank by two men. If upon this experiment they swam, it was a satisfactory proof of guilt. This ingenious method is said to have been invented by James I. who gave as a reason for it, that "as such persons had renounced their baptism by water, so the water refused to receive them."

After this detail of the detestable barbarities committed by this miscreant Hopkins, it is with gratification we learn that his great skill in Witchfinding, led to the belief that it was through diabolical assistance that he was enabled to do so. "That he cast out Devils through Beelzebub." In consequence, his favourite swimming experiment was tried upon himself, and he was upon

the event *condemned and executed for a Wizard!*

The different modes in which this subject has been treated by the poets of the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James I. will shew the difference of publick opinion entertained on it, and how much more force the belief had gained in Ford's days than it possessed with Middleton and Shakspeare. These, although they agree in familiarly introducing them, have used them for quite different purposes, and the similarity thought by some to subsist between them, will not cast the imputation of plagiarism on either, when it is recollected, that the mere general feature (in which alone the resemblance can be traced) were drawn by both from the same sources.

The Witches of Shakspeare seem to be perfectly poetical beings above humanity, and having no affections in common with created beings. They seem to be less *agents* of evil beings, than the very *spirits of evil*; they appear unsought for to generate impure thoughts in the breast of Macbeth, and do not actually interfere to assist his designs, but by tempting his ambition—they

———"raise such artificial sprights,
As by the strength of their illusion,
Shall draw him on to his confusion."

Middleton's Witches are many degrees beneath Shakspeare's in point of sublimity; they are agents of wickedness, delighting in the misery they inflict on mankind, and lending their assistance to any one who seeks them for this purpose.

"'Tis for the love of mischief they do this,
And that they're sworn to the first oath they
take."

Again: they are more in common life than the Weird Sisters, their feelings seem more of earth.

Hecate has a son, and the other
Witches have names—they delight
to soar

"In moonlight-nights o'er steeple tops,
Mountains and pine trees, that like pricks
or stops
Seem to our height: high towers and roofs
of princes,
Like wrinkles in the earth; whole pro-
vinces
Appear to our sight, then even like
A russet mole upon some lady's cheek,
When hundred leagues in air we feast and
sing,
Dance, kiss, and coll, use every thing."

Ford's Mother Sawyer is the
mere common Witch of a country
town, beaten and despised for her
age and infirmities; the revilings
and scorn of her oppressors drive
her to Sorcery: she is in short the
very Witch of James I.

"And why on me, why should the envious
world

Throw all their scandalous malice upon me,
'Cause I am poor, deform'd, and ignorant,
And like a bow buckled and bent together
By some more strong in mischief than my-
self,

Must I for that be made a common sink
For all the filth and rubbish of men's
tongues

To fall and run into? Some call me Witch,
And being ignorant of myself, they go

About to teach me how to be one, urging
That my bad tongue, by their bad usage
made so,

Forespeaks their cattle, doth bewitch their
corn,

Themselves, their servants, and their babes
at nurse;

This they enforce upon me, and in part
Make me to credit it."

It is, however, happy for us that
whether the fact be that such prac-
tices have or have not existed, it is
of no consequence either to our
faith as Christian, or to our happi-
ness as men; and as we look back
into the prejudices of our ancestors,
and tracing their superstitions,
blush for, while we condemn them,
we may congratulate ourselves that
we live in times when such things
are neither practised nor credited.

From the New Monthly Magazine,

Song writing,

Is a talent entirely "per se,"
and given, like every other branch
of genius, by nature. Shenstone
was labouring through his whole life
to write a perfect song, and suc-
ceeded no better than Pope did in
his attempts at a Cecilian Ode. Mr.
Moore is one of the very few poets
who have entered into the spirit of
this style of composition. His
songs abound in the most exquisite
similies, and generally conclude
with one, which may be said to be
the piece, like the dew drop at the
end of an unfolding rosebud, which,
tinged with the colour of the flower,
adds brightness to its hues, delicacy
to its shades, beauty to its shape,
and fragrance to its perfume!

POETRY.

WOMAN.

OH, woman! by nature ordain'd to bestow
Ev'ry joy that enlivens us pilgrims below;
Through life ever hovering near to assuage
The ills that assail us from boyhood to age:
In every affliction man's surest relief,—
In sickness his nurse, and his solace in grief;
When his spirit is clouded by error and
shame,
Her tenderness still may the truant reclaim;
And he whom no threats and no terrors
could move,
Will bow to the milder dominion of Love.

In the realms of the gay we behold her
advance,
All lightness and loveliness joining the dance;
But the revellers gone, in seclusion she moves,
Regardless of all save the *one* that she loves.

Enchantress! adorn'd with attractions like
these,
In mind and in person created to please;
Oh! why will you sully the charms you
possess,
Instructing mankind how to worship you less?
Thus perfect by nature, can fashion impart
One additional charm to the finger of Art?
No,—fruitless the search for fresh beauties
must be,
While all that is beautiful centres in thee.